



LAKE CASCADE

N E W S B R I E F

March 2002

BUREAU OF
RECLAMATION

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Reclamation Releases Final Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment

This is the ninth – and final – Newsbrief prepared as part of the Lake Cascade Resource Management Plan (RMP) process. The RMP and Final Environmental Assessment (EA) are the culmination of a multi-year planning process by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), Snake River Area Office, to plan for the future use and management of Reclamation lands at Lake Cascade. Reclamation prepared the new Lake Cascade RMP to respond to changing issues and resources in the 10 years since the original RMP was completed. The updated RMP will be an improved blueprint for the future use,

management, and site development of Reclamation lands at the reservoir for the next 10 years.

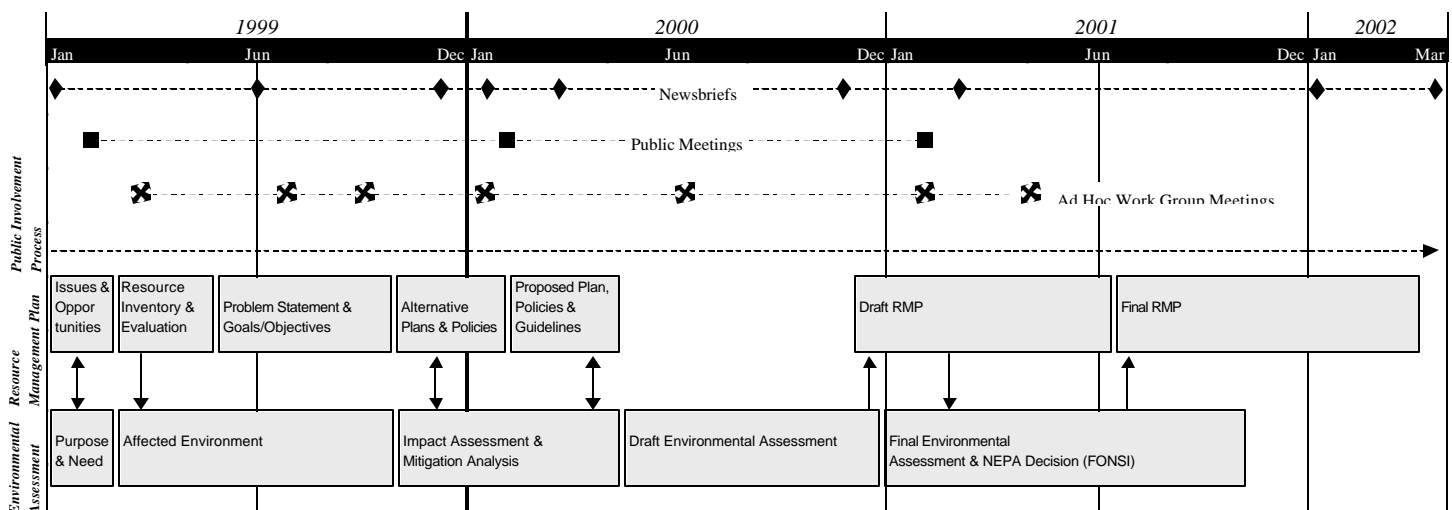
Previous Newsbriefs focused on various studies, earlier products, and the progress of the planning process. These Newsbriefs presented information on the planning process itself, identified the issues and opportunities, addressed the development of the alternatives examined, presented information from the Draft EA, and summarized potential changes to the Preferred Alternative.

Findings of the Environmental Assessment

This final Newsbrief focuses on the findings of the Final EA and the management direction provided in the RMP itself, as presented in the Preferred Alternative as well as the Plan's Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions. Reclamation's Draft EA of the Lake Cascade RMP was released for public and agency

review on December 20, 2000. The purpose of the EA was to evaluate potential impacts associated with the Proposed Action – in this case, implementing the RMP. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the EA examined a range of alternatives, including the No Action (or Status Quo)

Resource Management Plan Schedule



■ Tasks completed

Findings of the Environmental Assessment (continued)

Alternative, against which the effects of the three “action” alternatives could be compared. The Draft EA also identified a Preferred Alternative among those action alternatives.

Through its public involvement program, Reclamation actively sought input and comment on the contents and analyses presented in the Draft EA. To facilitate public comment, Reclamation hosted two public hearings (one in Boise on January 31, 2001, and the other in Cascade on February 1, 2001) as part of a 60-day public review/comment period. A total of 125 people attended these hearings, which were structured to incorporate the public’s concerns into the planning process. As a result of the comments received, a change was made to the Preferred Alternative regarding the consideration of opening the former State airstrip. This concept was not part of the original Preferred Alternative as presented in the Draft EA. Therefore, Reclamation sought input on this potential change and extended the comment period an additional 30 days until March 28, 2001, to provide the public an opportunity to consider this potential change and provide comments.

Over 250 formal comments were received during the public review period. Feedback received at the hearings and during the review period pertained to elements of the Preferred Alternative or other alternatives that commentors either favored or objected to. Many of the comments focused on four main subject areas: re-opening the former State airstrip, use of the Crown Point railroad grade, boating on the Boulder Creek Arm, and ensuring good water quality. Based on these comments, Reclamation made appropriate changes to the Draft EA, and to the Preferred Alternative in particular. These changes include considering permitting the former State airstrip if certain conditions are met and extending the length of boat ramps at several sites. The Ad Hoc Work Group (AHWG) was also instrumental in commenting on the EA from draft to final, as well as identifying and refining the Preferred Alternative. In this capacity, the AHWG represented its various

constituencies and helped represent the public’s interests.

The Final EA, released in September 2001, formally identifies Reclamation’s recommended alternative (the Preferred Alternative). Based on the analysis in the Final EA, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued, indicating that implementing the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to the natural and human environment. Implementation of the RMP may cause minimal short-term impacts on existing resources, but in the long term it will protect and enhance natural, cultural, and recreation resources. Implementation of the RMP under the Preferred Alternative is not likely to adversely affect endangered species listed under the Endangered Species Act, such as the Ute ladies’ tresses, bald eagle, Canada lynx, and gray wolf. In addition, Reclamation and its contractors will implement Best Management Practices when constructing or maintaining recreation areas or managing vegetation and habitat on Reclamation lands.

As noted, proposed management of aviation uses has generated considerable public comment and has been the subject of extensive discussions (including a March 2001 Newsbrief devoted to this topic). These discussions have led to changes and clarifications in the final RMP provisions. In addition, changing circumstances in the latter half of 2001 required changes and/or clarifications in three other areas: potential road or area closures around the dam due to increased security and safety concerns, requests from adjacent landowners for Reclamation to permit excavating for dock access because of low water conditions, and developer proposals for community boat docks in the newly designated Rural Residential area (now known as Cape Kantola Ranch). Together, these RMP changes and clarifications represent the only substantive alterations to the proposed RMP (i.e., the Preferred Alternative) described in the Final EA. Reclamation has reviewed these changes and determined that they do not alter the conclusions or validity of the

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and the Lake
Cascade RMP
on the
World Wide Web*

www.pn.usbr.gov

Findings of the Environmental Assessment (continued)

Final EA/FONSI; because of this, no supplemental analysis or formal public review was conducted. However, an additional Newsbrief was prepared and mailed out in January 2002.

Reclamation proposes to implement the Preferred Alternative, as presented in the Final EA, over the 10-year life of the RMP. The Preferred Alternative would allow expansion and development of some recreation sites and facilities, while increasing several selected efforts to protect and manage natural and cultural resources on Reclamation lands. In general, the land use designations from the 1991 RMP have been continued. One area of Conservation/Open Space has been converted to Rural Residential (RR) in the area south of Arrowhead Point since it now meets the RR criteria.

Under the Preferred Alternative, all existing recreation areas would be upgraded to meet Federal accessibility requirements wherever

possible. Additional signs would be posted to inform the public of property boundaries and pertinent rules and regulations. Orientation kiosks would be placed at popular locations to provide visitors with useful information about the area, such as maps and interpretive displays of the area's landscape and biological features, as well as applicable rules and regulations. In general, existing recreation sites at Lake Cascade would be modified to better accommodate current and future demand and use. This includes developing trails, and adding parking, as well as establishing new day use areas where use is now occurring on an ad hoc basis.

The Preferred Alternative would promote selected management actions that focus on protecting and enhancing fish and wildlife and their habitat (vegetation, wetlands, riparian areas, water quality), as well as proactive measures to protect cultural resources and ensure that Tribal treaty rights are met.

RMP Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions

The RMP is designed to balance resource management at Lake Cascade and surrounding Reclamation lands by establishing resource management goals. To implement the Preferred Alternative, the RMP presents broad goals, organized by five categories: (1) Natural Resources; (2) Cultural Resources, Sacred Sites, and Indian Trust Assets; (3) Recreation; (4) Operations, Maintenance, and Enforcement; and (5) Access, Coordination, and Implementation.

For each of these goals, the RMP presents objectives to achieve the goal, as well as relevant management actions that apply to each objective. Goals and objectives represent the broader management intent, whereas management actions often provide site-specific guidance or strategies to implement the goals and objectives. As an example, a specific management action related to recreation resources is to provide new restrooms at Big Sage that will allow four season use. The objectives and management actions, too

numerous to list in this Newsbrief, form the core of the RMP for Reclamation's future management of its lands.

The map of Lake Cascade on pages 4 and 5 shows the various management designations proposed in the Final EA Preferred Alternative and reflected in the RMP.

RMP goals for each of the five resource categories are listed below.

Natural Resources Goals

Reclamation's approach to managing natural resources is to work with land management partners to preserve and enhance native wildlife populations and their habitat, control noxious weed populations, and improve soil and water quality in accordance with any land use or resource management plans. When formulating goals, objectives, and management actions, Reclamation

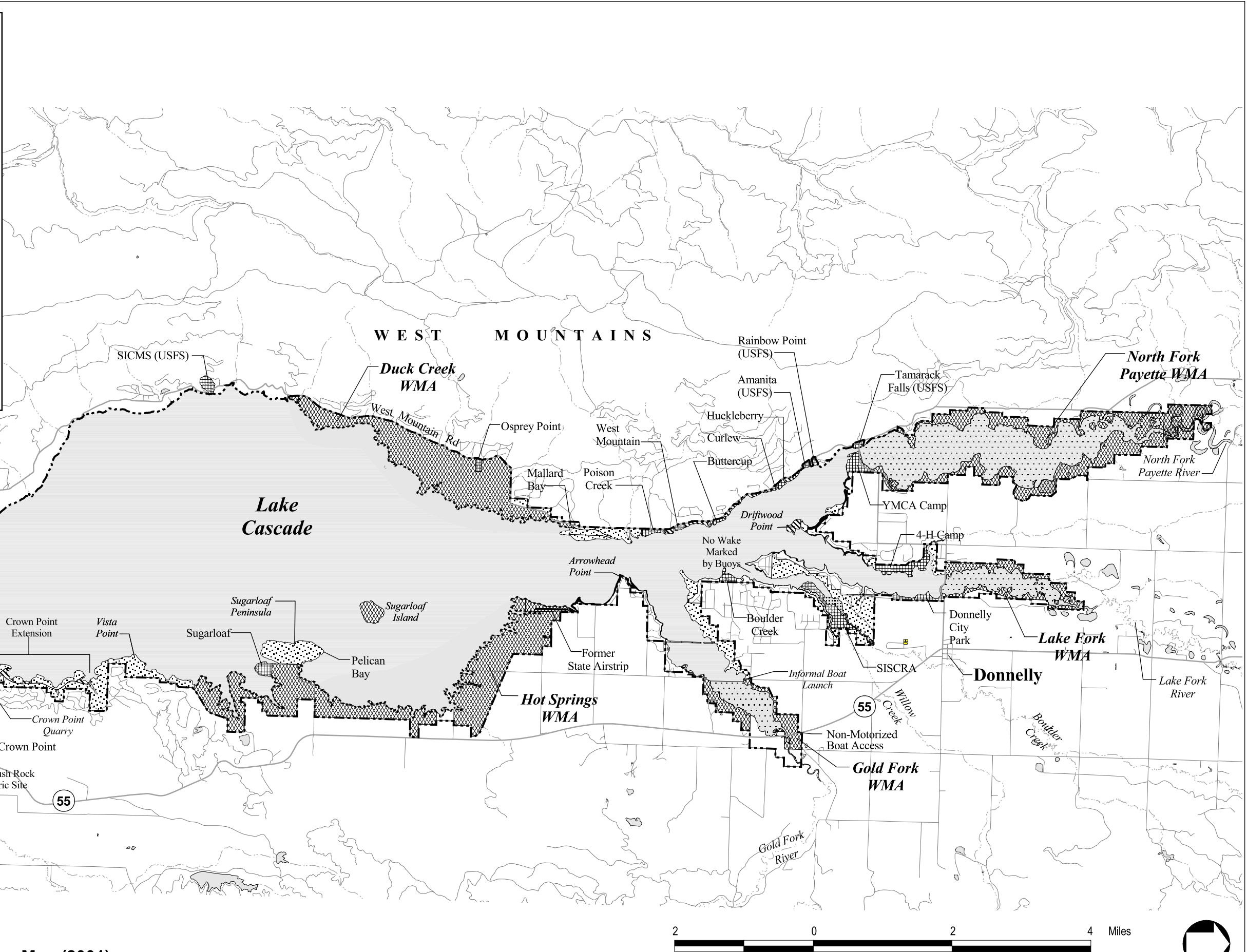
LEGEND:

- RMP Study Area
- Shoreline No Wake Zone (200 ft.)
- Road
- Railroad
- Stream, Lake, Pond - Perennial
- Open Water

Management Designation

- Non-Motorized Boating
- No Wake Area
- O & M Zone
- Private with Flowage Easement
- Rural Residential Area
- Conservation Open Space
- Proposed Recreation Site
- Recreation Site
- Wildlife Management Area

The information displayed here is based on the best available data at the time of publication. Neither the authors, Reclamation, or any other party here warrant or represent that the information is in every respect complete and accurate, and are not held responsible for errors or omissions.



Lake Cascade Resource Mangement Plan Map (2001)

RMP Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions (continued)

considered Federal and State legislation and policies, such as the Endangered Species Act. Specific goals include:

- Protect, conserve, and enhance wildlife habitat and natural resources on Reclamation lands.
- Protect and enhance the quality of the fishery at Lake Cascade.
- Protect and improve water quality in Lake Cascade and its tributaries.
- Monitor soil erosion in priority areas where erosion causes concern for water quality, safety, and damage to capital improvements.
- Protect the scenic quality and open space values on Reclamation lands at Lake Cascade.

Cultural Resources, Sacred Sites, and Indian Trust Assets Goals

Federal laws and regulations require Federal agencies to identify, evaluate, and appropriately manage cultural resources on lands they administer. “Cultural resources” is a broad term that includes prehistoric, historic, and traditional properties that reflect our heritage. Sacred sites are places accorded religious significance or ceremonial use by an Indian religion. Indian Trust Assets (ITAs) are legal interests in property held in trust by the U.S. for Indian Tribes, or individuals, such as lands, minerals, and hunting and fishing rights. Reclamation’s general approach is to avoid or reduce adverse effects upon these resources whenever possible. When formulating these goals, Reclamation considered relevant legislation, in particular the National Historic Preservation Act. Specific goals include:

- Protect and conserve cultural resources (including prehistoric, historic, and traditional cultural properties) and sacred sites.
- Protect and conserve Indian Trust Assets as specified in applicable Federal mandates.

Recreation Goals

Many of the issues that arose during the planning process were related to recreational use on Reclamation lands, and balancing this with competing uses (e.g., protection of natural and cultural resources). It is Reclamation’s approach to develop programs that inform the public about resources to improve their experience in the area, as well as to increase their awareness of natural and cultural resources, public health, and safety. Specific goals include:

- Provide adequate shoreline support facilities to meet demand for water-oriented recreation uses (within the limits of reservoir carrying capacity).
- Meet demand for land-based recreation uses within the constraints of Reclamation’s limited land area consistent with natural and cultural resource protection objectives.
- Minimize conflicts and promote safety for users of reservoir waters.
- Promote cooperative planning and implementation for recreation among Reclamation/Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR), other involved jurisdictions, and the public.

Operations, Maintenance, and Enforcement Goals

Reclamation lands within the Operation and Maintenance designation at Lake Cascade provide the facilities needed to adequately manage all Reclamation lands at Lake Cascade, and include the dam and roadway, administration offices, and maintenance building/yard. Specific goals include:

- Operate Lake Cascade to optimize recreation, fish, wildlife, and scenic values while meeting contractual irrigation commitments.
- Protect resources necessary for continued operation, maintenance, safety, and security of the dam and reservoir.

RMP Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions (continued)

Access, Coordination, and Implementation Goals

Reclamation's general land use approach is to: (1) manage the lands in a manner consistent with Federal laws and regulations, and the principles of good stewardship to accomplish Project purposes and serve the public interest; (2) seek opportunities for coordinated and cooperative land use planning with other agencies; and (3) develop an RMP that best supports the public interest, preserves and enhances environmental quality, and is compatible with Project purposes and needs. As part of this approach, Reclamation strives to maintain a current inventory of all land holdings and uses. In line with this, Reclamation established the following specific goals:

- Balance the need for expansion of recreation opportunities (or other development) with preservation of open space and scenic values.
- Minimize conflicts and incompatibilities among land uses.
- Resolve existing and prevent further encroachments and trespass by private parties on Reclamation lands and water.
- Provide adequate and safe access to all designated Reclamation recreation/public use areas.
- Develop and implement needed regulations and/or guidelines to promote public health, safety, and welfare, and to avoid conflicts in all land and water uses.
- Provide enhanced public information regarding opportunities and management at Lake Cascade.
- Achieve timely implementation of RMP update programs and projects.
- Continue public and agency involvement through RMP update implementation.

Where to Find the RMP and Final EA Documents

Copies of this Newsbrief have been sent to all who are on the Newsbrief mailing list, which currently includes more than 1,300 addresses. The RMP and Final EA documents are each over 200 pages long, plus appendices; therefore, they are not being mailed to everyone on the mailing list. Digital versions of the RMP and EA documents can be accessed on Reclamation's website at: www.pn.usbr.gov (follow links to the Lake Cascade RMP). Hard copies or CDs of the RMP and EA may be requested from Jim Budolfson - Resource Manager, USBR Snake River Area Office, 214 Broadway Avenue, Boise, ID 83702-7298, (208) 334-1466. In addition, hard copies of the RMP and Final EA are being sent to several places where the public can review them. Locations were chosen for their convenience and public accessibility. Hard copies of the documents are available at the following locations:

Boise Public Library
715 S Capitol Boulevard
Boise, ID 83702-7115

Caldwell Public Library
1010 Dearborn Street
Caldwell, ID 83605-4165

Idaho State Library
325 W State Street
Boise, ID 83702-6055

Nampa Public Library
101 11th Avenue S
Nampa, ID 83651

Parma Library
121 N 3rd Street
Parma, ID 83660-5725

Cascade Public Library
105 N Front Street
Cascade, ID 83611

McCall Public Library
218 E Park Street
McCall, ID 83638

*** U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**
Snake River Area Office
214 Broadway Avenue
Boise, ID 83702-7298

*** U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**
Lake Cascade Field Office
Cascade, ID 83611

*** U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**
PN Regional Office
1150 N Curtis Road
Boise, ID 83706

* CD copies are also available here.

RMP Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions (continued)

To review the specific objectives and management actions associated with the broader goals previously listed, Reclamation encourages you to review the RMP. The RMP and Final EA documents can be

accessed on Reclamation's website at www.pn.usbr.gov. Follow links to the Lake Cascade RMP.

A Final Note

Reclamation wants to thank you for your input and continued interest in the preparation of this RMP. We also want to extend a special thanks to members of the Ad Hoc Work Group, who met a total of eight times over the course of the planning process, providing invaluable input to the successful development of the plan. The final Work Group meeting was held on June 21, 2001 to brief members on the findings of the Final EA and solicit input on the Final RMP, and the planning process in general.

A request made very early on by members of the Work Group suggested that the final plan

be one that is realistic in its direction and achievable in its means. It was also suggested that interested parties be kept informed as to the status of the actions outlined in the plan. To these ends, we: (1) have made a concerted effort to give all of the management actions a "reality check" prior to adoption; and (2) will be conducting an annual partner and stakeholder meeting to provide information on the previous year's activities, and get feedback on planned activities for the following year in implementing the RMP.



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